7/21/86

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A NEWS SUMMARY
FOR HISPANICS
from the
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Office of Information,
and Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.
20210

Week of July 21, 1986

IN THIS ISSUE:

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM HELPS WORKERS, PROTECTS EMPLOYERS' INTERESTS, SAYS HUMBERTO COSTA

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Week of July 21, 1986

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM HELPS WORKERS,
PROTECTS EMPLOYERS' INTERESTS, SAYS HUMBERTO COSTA

WASHINGTON -- Humberto Costa, an employee of the U.S. Labor Department's Unemployment Insurance (UI) Service, describes this program as one that "helps the worker and also protects the interests of employers."

A complex program, unemployment insurance provides benefits to workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own. It is administered jointly by the Labor Department's Employment and Training Administration and the individual states.

The federal government establishes broad guidelines and allocates administrative funds to states; states set eligibility provisions, take applications and administer payments under provisions of state law.

Before joining the Labor Department here in September 1985, Costa was with a UI local office in Louisiana "for a few years," and more recently with a UI local office in Virginia.

"It is at local offices that one has a great deal of personal contact with the public," says Costa.

Now as a UI program specialist, Costa helps monitor activities to assure that state UI operations comply with both federal and state laws. He also responds to claimants' letters, mostly from individuals who are dissatisfied with state determinations.

"Claimants believe that a letter to Washington, D.C., will result in a decision more favorable to them," says Costa He adds that he is not aware of a case in which a state has erred in its decsion, but emphasizes each case is reviewed thoroughly.

The UI program, says the Puerto Rican native, "is there to help people, but it is not simply a matter of awarding benefits. We also have a mission to ensure proper payments under the law."

Costa indicates that, "besides helping people cope with the hardship of unemployment, we attempt to detect abuses and help eliminate fraud of the UI program."

A graduate of Louisiana State University, Costa views his work environment as one that reflects a "lot of team effort and offers opportunity for input in developing program guidelines for the federal-state UI program."

He adds that in keeping with the age of high technology, much of the official correspondence is prepared at the word processor.

# # #

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Week of July 21, 1986

VELAZQUEZ HONORED BY FEDERAL
WOMEN'S PROGRAM

NEW YORK -- Maritza Velazquez, a secretary-stenographer with the U.S. Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance programs (OFCCP) in New York City, has received the Secretary of the Year Award.

The award was presented by the New York Regional Federal Women's Program in recognition of "superior performance by a federal government employee."

Ms. Velazquez was also a finalist for the Secretary of the Year Award given by the New York Federal Executive Board.

Ms. Velazquez is secretary to the assistant regional administrator of OFCCP. OFCCP is charged with administration and enforcement of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity regulations for federal government contractors and subcontractors.

Ms. Velazquez began federal service with the Labor Department's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administraiton and Management in 1976 as a clerk-stenographer. She advanced to the position of secretary-stenographer and, in 1985, served as an administrative assistant. She is the recipient of several awards, including a cash award and letters of commendation from the Hispanic Employment Program.

# # #

Week of July 21, 1986

PRODUCER PRICE INDEXES--JUNE 1986

WASHINGTON -- The Producer Price Indes for Finished Goods showed no change on a seasonally adjusted basis from May to June, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported. The index had declined rapidly during the first 4 months of 1986 before turning up somewhat in May. The index for intermediate goods also was unchanged in June, following five consecutive monthly decreases. Prices received by producers of crude goods fell 1.1 percent, the sixth decline in the last 7 months.

Among finished goods, the index for energy goods moved down modestly in June, after much more sizable decreases during the first 4 months of 1986 and a moderate upturn in May. Consumer food prices were unchanged in June, following small rises in March and April and a larger advance in May. The index for finished goods other than foods and energy also was unchanged over the month, continuing the recent trend of little or no change in this index.

In the first half of 1986, prices received by domestic producers of goods at all stages of processing declined at rates not experienced since 1949. From December 1985 to June 1986, the Producer Price Index for Finished Goods fell at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 6.5 percent, prices for intermediate goods decreased at an annual rate of 8.3 percent after seasonal adjustment, and the crude materials index moved down at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 20.9 percent. Sharply lower prices for crude oil and refined petroleum products were the overwhelming influence behind these first-half index movements. Decreases in food-related prices were an important factor within the Crude Materials Price Index, but were smaller and less significant among intermediate and finished goods. The rate of inflation for nonfood, nonenergy goods generally was moderate at the crude and the finished levels, while the index for such items within the intermediate stage of processing category actually declined.

Before seasonal adjustment, the Producer Price Index for Finished Goods remained virtually unchanged in June at 288.9 (1967=100). From June 1985 to June 1986, the Finished Goods Price Index fell 1.7 percent. During the same 12-month period, consumer food prices climbed 2.4 percent, the index for finished energy goods decreased 28.3 percent, consumer goods other than foods and energy rose 2.2 percent, and the capital equipment index moved up 1.8 percent. The index for intermediate goods declined 3.8 percent over the 12 months ended in June 1986, while crude material prices fell 10.0 percent.

# # #

WEEK OF JULY 21, 1986

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

A work-disabled person is defined as one under age 65 who has a physical or mental condition that prevents her or him from working or limits the amount of work that can be done, or who is retired because of ill health, according to a fact sheet on working women published by the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

###

In 1981, the average disabled woman was not employed, nor was she looking for work, and her total 1980 annual income was less than $3,500. The average age for a work-disabled woman was 51; for a nondisabled woman it was 33, according to a fact sheet on working women published by the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

###

In 1981, disabled women who were employed were twice as likely as nondisabled women to be self-employed. One in every 9 (10.8 percent) employed disabled women were self-employed, compared with just over 1 in every 20 working women with no disabilities, according to a fact sheet on working women published by the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

###

Disabled women represented 8.5 percent of all working age women (ages 16 to 64) in 1981 or slightly more than 1 out of every 12 women in this age group, according to a fact sheet published by the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

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A NEWS SUMMARY
FOR HISPANICS

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Week of July 28, 1986

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LABOR DEPARTMENT'S ILA PLASENCIA HONORED
BY NATIONAL HISPANIC WOMEN'S GROUP

MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS FOR HISPANIC FAMILIES
WAS $409 DURING SECOND QUARTER OF 1986, BLS REPORTS

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX--JUNE 1986

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Week of July 28, 1986

LABOR DEPARTMENT'S ILA PLASENCIA HONORED
BY NATIONAL HISPANIC WOMEN'S GROUP

DES MOINES - Ila Plasencia, a career civil servant with the U.S. Labor Department, has been honored by the National Council of Hispanic Women in "recognition of her high achievements."

Plasencia, a compliance officer with the Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division area office in Des Moines, was nominated for the award by Governor Terry E. Branstad.

In the letter of nomination, the governor praised Plasencia for her "significant contributions while serving in appointed and volunteer capacities to a higher quality of life for all Hispanics in Iowa." He also praised Plasencia for her "high level of commitment, accomplishments and, above all, an unselfish willingness to give of herself for the benefit of others."

Long involved in improving the status and well-being of Hispanics, women and others, Plasencia has served on numerous commissions, including: Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Spanish-Speaking Peoples Committee, The Legal Rights Commission and Commission for the Status of Women.

A charter member of Council #306 of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in Des Moines, she is also LULAC National Vice President for the Midwest.

Plasencia has been with the Labor Department for nearly eight years. As a compliance officer, she helps enforce federal wage hour laws in the Des Moines area.

Before joining the Labor Department, she served with the U.S. Departments of Justice and Agriculture in Des Moines.

The National Council of Hispanic Women, based in Washington, D.C., is chaired by Ana Colomar O'Brien and co-chaired by Dr. Alba Moesser.

# # #

Week of July 28, 1986

MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS FOR HISPANIC FAMILIES
WAS $409 DURING SECOND QUARTER OF 1986, BLS REPORTS

WASHINGTON -- The median weekly earnings of Hispanic families was $409 during the second quarter of 1986 the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported.

This compares with the median weekly earnings of $558 for white families, and $399 for black families.

The median of weekly earnings is the value at which half of family earnings distribution lies above, and 50 percent lies below.

Among Hispanic families, those headed by women with no spouse present, reported a median weekly earnings of $264, compared with $376 for families maintained by men. This compares with $450 for married-couple families.

According to the BLS report on employment and earnings characteristics of families for the second quarter of 1986, slightly more than half (51.3 percent) of Hispanic families with wage or salary earnings had only one wage earner, the balance reported two or more earners.

Overall, the BLS reported that about 50.8 million of the nation's 62.9 million families had at least one employed member in the second quarter of 1986. This was 460,000 more than a year earlier. Over the same period, there was little change in unemployment in families.

Estimates of the BLS report were obtained from the current population survey which provided basic information on the labor force, employment and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the BLS by the Census Bureau from a sample of 59,500 households in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

# # #

Week of July 28, 1986

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX--June 1986

WASHINGTON -- The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rose 0.5 percent before seasonal adjustment in June to a level of 327.9 (1967=100), the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported. For the 12-month period ended in June, the CPI-U has increased 1.7 percent.

The Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) also increased 0.5 percent in June prior to seasonal adjustment. The June 1986 CPI-W level of 323.0 (1967=100) was 1.3 percent higher than the index in June 1985.

CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U)-- Seasonally Adjusted Changes

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the CPI-U rose 0.5 percent in June. This compares with a 0.2 percent increase in May and declines in each of the 3 preceding months. Excluding energy, the CPI-U rose 0.2 percent in June, the same as in May. Energy prices, which were responsible for the earlier declines, rose 2.3 percent in June, following a slight advance in May, and accounted for about half of the June advance in the overall CPI-U. Substantial increases in prices for gasoline, electricity, and natural gas were only partially offset by a further decline in fuel oil prices.

During the first 6 months of 1986, the CPI-U declined at a seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) of 0.2 percent. This decrease represents the first time that the index has declined over the first half of the year since 1955. Reflecting the sharp drop in crude oil prices, the index for energy commodities--fuel oil, coal, bottled gas, and motor fuels--declined at an annual rate of 40.2 percent in the first half of 1986. Prices for used cars and grocery store foods also declined in the first half. On the other hand, shelter costs continued to advance at an annual rate of about 5 percent. The index for all items excluding food, shelter, energy, and used cars increased at an annual rate of 4 percent during the first 6 months. Within this all other items group, however, price movements for commodities and for services continued to diverge. Price increases in the goods sector, continued to moderate, but prices for services, in particular medical care, have accelerated.
The annual rates for these groups during the last several years and the first half of 1986 are shown below.

NOTE: The Bureau of Labor Statistics currently is completing a major revision of the Consumer Price Index. Beginning with release of the CPI for January 1987 on February 27, 1987, the Bureau will introduce revised versions of the current CPI's both for All Urban Consumers and for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers. The revised CPI's will reflect more current population and spending patterns and numerous technical enhancements.

# # #

WEEK OF JULY 28, 1986

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AMONG MAJOR WORKER GROUPS, BLS REPORTS

HISPANIC ECONOMIST HELPS MONITOR
THE PUBLIC'S BUYING PATTERNS

REAL EARNINGS IN JUNE 1986

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Week of August 8, 1986

WEEKLY EARNINGS OF HISPANICS LOWEST
AMONG MAJOR WORKER GROUPS, BLS REPORTS

WASHINGTON -- The median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers of Hispanic origin were $278 during the second quarter of 1986, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported.

Earnings of Hispanics were lower than for blacks at $294, and whites, $368.

Among Hispanics working full-time, the weekly median earnings for men were $303, for women, $243.

The highest weekly earnings among Hispanics were reported in the 25 to 54 year age group: for men, $328; for women, $261.

Statistics on median weekly earnings are the amounts which divide a given earnings distribution into two equal groups--one having earnings above the median, and the other having earnings below the median.

The BLS reported that, overall, median usual weekly earnings of the nation's 78.5 million full-time wage and salary workers were $358 in the second quarter of 1986. This represents an increase of 3.2 percent from a year earlier, twice the rate of increase in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers over this period. Median earnings for women, at $290, were 70 percent of the male median, a proportion that generally has been trending upward. In early 1979, when the quarterly weekly earnings series began, the ratio was 62 percent.

Estimates for this report were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS) which provides basic information on the labor force, employment and unemployment. The survey of some 59,500 households is conducted monthly for the BLS by the Census Bureau. The earnings data are collected for one-quarter of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wages and salaries. It excludes self-employment income.

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NOTICIAS DE LA SEMANA - 8/4/86
EARNINGS P.2

Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings			
			In current dollars		In constant (1977) dollars	
	II 1985	II 1986	II 1985	II 1986	II 1985	II 1986
SEX AND AGE						
Total, 16 years and over	76,834	78,508	$347	$358	$196	$199
Men, 16 years and over	45,635	46,295	408	416	230	231
16 to 24 years	7,074	6,884	241	246	136	137
25 years and over	38,561	39,412	446	456	252	254
Women, 16 years and over	31,199	32,213	280	290	158	161
16 to 24 years	5,529	5,487	212	216	120	120
25 years and over	25,670	26,726	300	309	169	172
FAMILY RELATIONSHIP						
Husbands	30,139	30,462	458	472	259	262
Wives	16,114	16,558	290	301	164	167
Women who maintain families	4,292	4,449	282	291	160	162
Men who maintain families	1,392	1,362	397	388	224	216
Other persons in families:	6,126	6,175	240	244	136	135
Men	4,388	4,349	215	222	121	123
Women	7,978	8,286	375	390	212	217
All other men 1/	6,404	6,866	310	313	175	174
All other women 1/						
RACE, HISPANIC ORIGIN, AND SEX						
White	66,402	67,675	357	368	202	205
Men	40,109	40,603	418	427	236	238
Women	26,292	27,072	283	293	160	163
Black	8,312	8,656	284	294	160	163
Men	4,340	4,483	303	322	171	179
Women	3,972	4,173	264	267	149	148
Hispanic origin	(2)	5,600	(2)	278	(2)	155
Men	(2)	3,605	(2)	303	(2)	168
Women	(2)	1,995	(2)	243	(2)	135

1/ The majority of these persons are living alone or with nonrelatives. Also included are persons in married-couple families where the husband or wife is in the Armed Forces and persons in unrelated subfamilies.

2/ Data on Hispanic wage and salary earners for 1985 are not available on a revised basis that reflects the adjustments to the population totals introduced in January 1986.

NOTE: Detail for the above race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because data for the "other races" group are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

-more-

NOTICIAS DE LA SEMANA - 8/4/86
EARNINGS P.3

Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by age, race, Hispanic origin, and sex, second quarter 1986 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Age, race, and Hispanic origin	Total		Men		Women	
	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings
TOTAL						
16 years and over	78,508	$358	46,295	$416	32,213	$290
16 to 24 years	12,371	230	6,884	246	5,487	216
16 to 19 years	2,147	176	1,205	184	941	169
20 to 24 years	10,224	246	5,678	264	4,546	227
25 years and over	66,137	390	39,412	456	26,726	309
25 to 54 years	57,496	391	34,126	454	23,370	312
25 to 34 years	25,573	363	15,262	400	10,311	310
35 to 44 years	19,369	414	11,430	492	7,939	317
45 to 54 years	12,555	417	7,434	504	5,121	308
55 years and over	8,641	385	5,286	469	3,355	288
55 to 64 years	7,782	394	4,789	477	2,993	292
65 years and over	859	293	497	344	362	249
White						
16 years and over	67,675	368	40,603	427	27,072	293
16 to 24 years	10,836	233	6,058	249	4,778	217
25 years and over	56,839	401	34,545	473	22,294	312
25 to 54 years	49,157	401	29,801	470	19,356	316
55 years and over	7,682	398	4,744	485	2,938	290
Black						
16 years and over	8,656	294	4,483	322	4,173	267
16 to 24 years	1,267	210	669	219	598	200
25 years and over	7,389	312	3,814	352	3,575	283
25 to 54 years	6,585	315	3,354	357	3,231	284
55 years and over	804	293	460	313	344	277
Hispanic origin						
16 years and over	5,600	278	3,605	303	1,995	243
16 to 24 years	1,167	206	746	207	421	205
25 years and over	4,433	303	2,859	326	1,574	260
25 to 54 years	4,075	304	2,618	328	1,457	261
55 years and over	358	289	241	310	117	245

NOTE: Detail for the above race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because data for the "other races" group are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

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Week of August 4, 1986

HISPANIC ECONOMIST HELPS MONITOR
THE PUBLIC'S BUYING PATTERNS

WASHINGTON -- When Ana P. Lavallee does the family's weekly grocery shopping, she's always alert to spot new products.

"It's a natural extension of my work as an economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics," says the Puerto Rican native, "and the family loves the excitement and experience of trying new products."

She's also alert to the introduction of other products because, she notes, "the bureau is always revising and expanding the Consumer Expenditure Survey to include changes in buying patterns of the public. We have to be constantly aware of what is going on in the area of consumer expenditures."

For Lavallee, the research, evaluation and documentation of the constant flow of data is an exciting challenge.

But even more exciting is witnessing the many ways the survey is used by so many different groups--government, business, labor, academic analysts and others.

"The bureau is the only place you can find detailed information on so many characteristics," she exclaims.

The current Consumer Expenditure Survey program, begun in late 1979, collects data on the buying habits of American consumers. These data also are required for periodic revisions of the Consumer Price Index.

"You can learn about expenditure patterns by age, different regions, family size, race and ethnic origin, education, occupations. There is no limit to the detailed information one can seek and get from the survey," Lavallee says.

As examples of users, she cites a recent call from a man who planned to use the data in making a decision about a job offer. The IRS, she adds, uses the survey in making up sales tax tables carried in Federal Income Tax forms.

Reflecting enthusiasm about her job, Lavallee adds that once the Consumer Expenditure Survey is made available to the public, "our office is deluged with queries and the public tells us how that information will be put to new uses.

"That makes the work even more exciting for me and my colleagues," she says.

There is a follow-up to the consumer survey--a BLS bulletin with more detailed tables and analysis of results and can be purchased from the Government Printing Office.

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Lavallee joined the BLS in the late 1960's working part time so she could devote more quality time to the children. She admits that like most women combining a career and family responsibility, "I tried to be a 'super mom.'" She began full-time work in 1985 when her children were grown.

Lavallee also helps develop and conduct seminars at the bureau's International Labor Statistics Program Center, which often includes participants from Spanish-speaking countries. A recent program was specially designed for a group from Guatemala; another seminar included representatives from Costa Rica.

"It's a most gratifying experience to be able to use one's technical and bilingual skills," says the graduate of the University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras.

Lavallee did graduate work at Boston College under a scholarship from both educational institutions.

Lavallee and her husband, Fernand, whom she met at Boston College, have two sons: Fernand, a law student at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va.; and Charles, a sophomore at Providence College, Providence, R.I. Her husband is with the department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs.

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Week of August 4, 1986

REAL EARNINGS IN JUNE 1986

WASHINGTON -- Real average weekly earnings decreased 0.3 percent from May to June after seasonal adjustment, according to preliminary data released by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. This decrease stemmed from a 0.5 percent increase in the Consumer Price Index as measured by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), which was partially offset by a 0.2 percent increase in average hourly earnings. Average weekly hours were unchanged over the month.

Data on average weekly earnings are collected from the payroll reports of private nonfarm establishments. Earnings of both full-time and part-time workers holding production or nonsupervisory jobs are included. Real average weekly earnings are calculated by adjusting earnings in current dollars for changes in the CPI-W.

Average weekly earnings increased by 1.5 percent between June of 1985 and 1986 as a result of a 2.1 percent increase in average hourly earnings, which was partially offset by a 0.6 percent decrease in average weekly hours. After adjustment for a 1.3 percent increase in the CPI-W over the same period, real average weekly earnings increased 0.2 percent. Before adjustment for seasonal change and deflation by the CPI-W, average weekly earnings were $305.20 in June 1986, compared with $300.61 a year earlier.

THE HOURLY EARNINGS INDEX

The Hourly Earnings Index (HEI) in dollars of constant purchasing power decreased 0.1 percent between May and June. Compared with a year earlier, the HEI increased by 1.1 percent. The HEI excludes the effects of two types of changes unrelated to underlying wage rate movements--fluctuations in overtime in manufacturing and interindustry employment shifts.

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Week of August 4, 1986

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

About 7,100 individuals attended courses at the OSHA Training Institute at Des Plaines, ILL. (a Chicago suburb) during the 1985 fiscal year, according to the Labor Department's annual report. Participants included personnel from the Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, state governments, other federal agencies and the private sector.

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The Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) awarded $5.6 million in fiscal year 1985 to approximately 100 nonprofit groups providing a variety of job safety and health services. The grants were awarded under OSHA's New Directions grants program to support training and education projects addressing serious problems in construction, manufacturing, and other high hazard occupational and industrial sectors.

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The New Directions grants program of the U.S. Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration is designed to provide an organization with funds needed to develop its staff, skills and services as a competent, self-sufficient center for job safety and health.

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The U.S. Labor Department's Dislocated Worker Program is an effort to aid experienced workers who find themselves displaced due to plant closings, technological changes, foreign competition or other major economic changes. The program is funded under Title III of the Job Training Partnership Act, according to the Labor Department's annual report for the 1985 fiscal year.

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